

581  
AN  
Affectionate Address  
TO THE  
MIDDLE AND LOWER CLASSES  
OF  
BRITISH SUBJECTS,  
ON THE  
PRESENT ALARMING CRISIS.

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## ADDRESS, &c.

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WHEN the higher orders of men are contributing largely to the support of the state, it is surely incumbent upon us, my brethren, to do all in our power to aid them. We, as well as they, have an interest in the state, and it is our duty and interest, in common with them, to defend it. If we have not money to contribute, we have what may be of more account, strength and courage; and we have parents, wives, and children, who trust to us, not in vain, for protection. We, as well as the great, have every thing at stake, and have equal reason with them to defend all that is dear to us, with energy and exertion. I am convinced every soul of us will do so, if we could once be roused to a proper sense of our danger. But is it not now high time that we should, when we are threatened with immediate and utter destruction, and when our enemies, refusing to listen to any terms of accommodation, have declared that either they or we must fall? Shall the British lion slumber when thus threatened and insulted, and tamely wait till he receive lashes and wounds, before he can be roused to defend himself and repel the danger? If this supineness should not be fatal, it would at least be extremely foolish.

When I take the liberty of addressing you, my brethren, from a pure regard to your truest interest, I will not injure or affront you so far as to suppose,

that even a few among you may be deficient in loyalty to their king, or in love to their country. No; the artifices which have been practised upon some of you, with a view to alienate your affections, have completely failed. *The people* now have their eyes opened, and they see that their pretended friends were their real *enemies*. But it is not enough, my friends and fellow-subjects, to refrain from hurting our parent-constitution, from whose breasts we derive all our nourishment and comfort; it is our indispensable duty to exert ourselves, as much as possible, to defend her. To animate you to this exertion, in a moment that calls for the utmost activity and ardour is the purpose of this humble, but earnest and affectionate address; in which I beg leave to call your attention, 1. To the greatness of the blessings which you enjoy; 2. To the greatness of the evils with which you are threatened; and, 3. To the measures which you ought to adopt in order to repel them.

1. Of all the nations under heaven none was ever so highly favoured as ours. Blessed with a mild and equitable government, which gave the amplest security to our liberty, property and persons, every man could sit down under his own fig-tree, without any one to make him afraid. Every individual had the means of happiness within his reach, and every one securely enjoyed the fruits of his labour. Thus the whole nation enjoyed as high a degree of happiness, as is perhaps compatible with the present state of human nature. Indeed it may be questioned whether human nature can well bear so much prosperity as we enjoy, without being sunk in guilt or overset with giddiness.

For the last half century, especially, our trade, commerce and manufactures, prospered with such rapidity as is perhaps unexampled in the history of mankind. Riches flowed in upon us in a full tide



from all quarters of the world, insomuch that we became the wonder, the envy, and the dread of all the nations of Europe. And where is the man, rich or poor, who did not share in this national prosperity? It enriched the active, supported the beggar, and often fed the idle. You, my friends, had an ample share of it. When you chose to be industrious and active, you had not only all the necessaries, but many of the comforts, and even some of the superfluities of life. Many of you, perhaps the most, since you began to work, have had your wages doubled, tripled, and quadrupled, always keeping pace with the growing prosperity of your country. Many of you have risen from poverty to affluence, and more might have done so, if they had not been extravagant or idle. To pinching want all of you are strangers, and strangers even to the fear of it, except perhaps in one hard season, in which government, with a tender and parental care, provided a supply of bread for the real poor, for nothing. Is it possible, then, that any of you, my brethren, can be so indifferent to his happiness, and so insensible of his mercies, as to consent to lose them? Is it possible that there can be a man in the nation who does not feel his interest in this national prosperity, or who will not exert himself to defend it?

Our religious advantages are no less remarkable than our worldly prosperity. The gospel, which is not only our chiefest blessing itself, but the chief cause of all others, shone among us with a clearer and brighter light, than ever it did in the world since the days of the apostles. From the highest to the lowest, every man had access to know the will of God, and the path to eternal felicity. The poorest had not only the gospel preached to them, but were generally taught to read it themselves. Was there ever a nation in the world in which such liberal provision was made for the instruction of the poor, by parochial, charity, and Sunday schools, as in

Great Britain? Was there ever any nation in the world in which there are so many other public institutions of charity, such as infirmaries and hospitals of all kinds, for the relief of the sick, the poor, the aged and the orphan? Or was there ever any other nation in the world which made such liberal provision for the maintenance of the poor? Where is the man, or rather the monster, that does not feel a glow of love and zeal for a country and constitution, under which the very poorest enjoy such unexampled happiness and comfort? Where is the Briton, however poor, who does not rejoice and boast that this happy country is his own; and who does not resolve with heart and hand to defend it? It is astonishing, my brethren, that you are not alarmed and roused at the present danger of losing all these inestimable blessings; for it is surely your peculiar interest as well as duty to defend them. This constitution, these laws, and these blessings, are the provision made by your country, in order to support *you* in want, age, or infirmity; and will *you* sit still, when they are attacked; and tamely submit to lose them? Who should guard them more than *you*, who *may* reap the benefit of them, if preserved; and who *must* feel the evil, if they should be lost? Nor would you alone feel the loss, but also the poor of future ages, who would deservedly curse you. For if these blessings were once lost, they could never be recovered. In the code of anarchy and atheism, there would be no such emanations of charity.

Liberty is another blessing which this country enjoys in so peculiar a degree, that *British liberty* is become a proverbial expression. The king and the subject, the rich and the poor, are bound by the same laws, and stand exactly on the same footing in a court of justice. The power of the king cannot take away even the life of a criminal, however mean his condition. He stands or falls by the law of his

country. But as men commonly estimate their happiness by comparing their situation with that of others, let us compare our condition with that of any other nation in the world, and mark the difference in our favour. In the vast regions of Africa and Asia, almost all is confessedly despotism, ignorance, and misery. In most of these parts the human race are so far degraded that they may be said to hold only a sort of middle rank between man and the beasts that perish. If it were not so, how could so many of them be bought and sold like cattle in the market? If there is any thing desirable in the wide-extended continent of America, it is only in those United States which are of British origin, and which have derived from us both their character and constitution: but without any legal provision for the poor, or any legal establishment of religion. In Europe, the only kingdom that can be said to be free, is Britain. Most of the other countries in it have been long groaning, less or more, under temporal and spiritual despotism; and many of them are now agonizing under a new and more arbitrary despotism, complicated with anarchy and atheism.

Nor was the general condition of the people of Britain itself any better if we go back but a few centuries. They were the absolute property of their masters, who exercised the power of life and death over them, and disposed of them as appendages to the land which they inhabited; along with which they always changed their owner. A man could not even give his daughter in marriage to any who did not reside on his master's estate, without getting his consent, and paying such a fine as would purchase another in place of her. Let those who complain of the want of liberty, and wish to turn it into licentiousness, compare this with their own condition, and learn to be thankful to God, to love their country, and to value and defend their real liberty.



We know so much of the history of the kingdom for near two thousand years back as may assure us that never in all that time, much less before it, was our country in possession of so much happiness, in any period, as in the days which we ourselves have seen. For half a century past no enemy has approached our dwellings. Our liberty was as complete as human nature (which needs restraint) could well bear; and our prosperity was a cup that overflowed. Before this time, as far back as any ray of history reaches, our country appears to have been in what may be called a constant state of warfare. One while neighbouring petty princes, or powerful chiefs and barons, with their followers, destroyed each other at home; another while they united in carrying their depredations into neighbouring countries, and then the inhabitants of those countries retaliated; or foreigners from a greater distance laid waste with fire and sword the lands of both, and swept them with the besom of destruction: insomuch that any one who examines the history of former times must be almost astonished to find the human species at all preserved in the country, in so long continued a train of calamities. The consequence of those perpetual wars were frequent famines, in which we read of the inhabitants being sometimes obliged to eat the grass of the field like beasts, and to have perished in numbers on the high ways with hunger. Pestilence, as usual, followed famine, and swept away its thousands. In only one of those calamities, a full third of all the people in this nation is said to have perished. What blessed times have we had, compared with those! What large arrears of thanks do we owe to God, and under him, to the happy government under which he has placed us? Since the world was created, never were these lands, nor any other that we know of, in possession of so much happiness. Never were the people so well fed, so well clothed, so well



lodged. Never did they possess such a degree of liberty, property, knowledge, and all the means of temporal and eternal felicity. Even within our own memory how great has been the change for the better? You, who have attained to old age, look back as far as you can recollect, and tell what were then the meagre looks, the ragged dress, the wretched huts, and scanty fare of the lower order of the people, who were little employed, and poorly rewarded, in comparison of what they are now. Tell, you in the lowest rank, what you know to be true, and confess that the progress of your comforts, and the melioration in your condition is, in so short a time, indeed astonishing. And will you now, for want of exertion, lose all this accumulation of happiness, and allow yourselves to be thrust back to slavery and anarchy, want and wretchedness, barbarism, ignorance, and atheism?

In the brief view which I have given of our national mercies, I have omitted one great blessing, peculiar to you, my brethren of the lower order of society; which is, that *you* have all these mercies free. The rich and the great bear all the taxes and burdens of the state, pay all the armies and navies that defend *you*, and support the government and the laws which protect you. *Your* liberty, security, religion, with all the comforts you enjoy in the best regulated society, and happiest land on which the sun ever shone, you have for nothing, or the next thing to nothing: for I know of no tax which a poor labouring man necessarily pays, if it be not perhaps a few pence for the leather of his shoes; and that only because it could not be distinguished from the leather for the shoes of the rich. There is also a small tax on candles, but not on oil, which the poor most commonly use for light. The poor, indeed, may, and often do tax themselves, by using spirits and some other things more noxious than necessary; but the earning of one day in the year

will more than pay all the tax to which a poor labouring man is necessarily subject. Is it not then your peculiar interest and duty, my friends, who are of this class, to defend a constitution so peculiarly kind to you, and to exert yourselves for the preservation of a state which has done every thing possible to make *your* situation comfortable, and in which *you* enjoy so great and so many blessings? Few, in comparison, were the mercies of your forefathers, and yet whenever they were called (which was but too often), they went forth with provisions upon their backs, to defend their poor huts and starving families. And will not you be ready, on one great emergency, to do what they did on many, and secure greater blessings than they had any conception of, to yourselves and to your posterity? Never had the poor, in any nation upon earth, so much at stake as you have.

Upon the whole, my brethren, although every work of man must, like himself, be short of absolute perfection, yet our laws, government and constitution, if not perfect, are however more so than any other that have hitherto existed, and in their nature capable of attaining to further degrees of perfection; to which they are continually tending. The liberty, the property, and the person of the subject, are more secure under them than in any other kingdom under heaven. How must you be astonished, then, to find that, even in this happy country, there may be some few who are so insensible of their mercies as to be dissatisfied, not only with the condition in which Providence has placed them, but also with the constitution under which they enjoy so many comforts? But you will remember that some, from a wrong turn of mind, are never to be satisfied. We know that, even in heaven, some were discontented with their condition, and fell from their happy estate: an everlasting warning to others, not to murmur without

reason. God forbid that we, like them, should be brought to know the value of our happiness from the misery which we should feel by losing it. This may lead us,

2. To consider the greatness of the evils with which we are now threatened.

The first and avowed object of our enemies is to overturn our happy constitution: that constitution under which *you*, my brethren, enjoy all the blessings I have mentioned. Should they succeed in this, which God forbid! and which, I trust, you will sooner perish than allow, we should be no more a free and happy people. The innocent would no longer be protected by laws, nor would those suspected of any guilt be allowed even the form of a trial. We could not surely expect that our enemies would treat us more kindly than they do their own people, whom they send to prison, to banishment, or to death, without so much as hearing what they have to offer in their own defence before a judge or jury. Thus, as with the mandate of a Turkish despot, has the Directory of France destroyed, or banished to America, a number of the best and greatest men of their nation: and such a treatment of their friends may show what is to be expected by us whom they deem their enemies. If our constitution should be overturned by such a people as this, we should have no further security either for life or liberty, to poor or rich. The lofty cedar and the humble briar would be consumed in the same fire: the stately mansion and the lowly hut would be involved in the same conflagration. Man would be to man as a tyger or a lion; and the howling wilderness a more desirable habitation than the peopled city. For, of all animals, the most dreadful to man is man, when set loose from every tie of law, conscience, and religion. Look around you, my brethren, while you have yet the affections of men, look around you on your parents, wives, and children, on all that are dear to you on earth, and



think of the danger of their being reduced to this sad condition. Surely your thoughts must recoil with horror from the dreadful prospect, and your arm be lifted up, ere it be too late, to defend them.

To deprive us of our property is another great object of our enemies. Their avowed purpose is to enrich themselves with the spoils of Britain, on the prospect of which they have been borrowing money to fit out their army of England. Perhaps you, my brethren, of the poorer class, may think that this is nothing to you. But there are very few so poor as to have nothing to lose: or, if some such there be, yet as they depend, one way or other, on the rich for their subsistence, they must suffer in the general calamity; and if the rich are ruined, so must they. If the fountain is dried up, none can be refreshed by the streams. If the riches of the nation should be seized by our enemies, all trade and manufactures, and every labour and art connected with civilization, would immediately cease, and the poor would have no employment. The millions in our peopled towns would be set idle; and multitudes, for want of bread, would perish. The strong may perhaps imagine that, in the scramble, they might come off with something more than they have. But in truth there would be little or nothing to scramble for. Every thing that escaped the devastation of fire and sword, would be seized by the enemy, who would take care to disappoint any other that may look for any share in the plunder. Or, should any thing escape them, how can the strong reckon upon holding it unjustly, any more than the weak, since the dwarf is strong enough to pour lead into the brain of the giant?

With our liberty and property we should also lose our commerce, the principal source of all our riches, and that which affords the means of subsistence to a great part of the lower and ordinary



class of people, throughout the nation, whether on sea or on shore, in town or in the country, in the city or in the village. For, with our immense commerce, all arts, trades and manufactures are closely connected. This is the chain on which they all hang, and if it be broke, they must fall to pieces, like a lamp of glass or an earthen vessel. The greatest commercial city in the modern, would then exactly answer the description of the greatest that was in the ancient world; and all the lesser would share in her calamity. *Our Tyre, the renowned city, which had the dominion of the sea, and caused her terror to be on all that haunt it, would become like the top of a rock, a place to spread nets upon; the habitation of a few wretched fishermen.*

All you, my brethren, who are employed in any branch of commerce, arts, or manufacture, would do well to consider what would be the consequence, if you should cease to be employed. And who *could* employ you, if the nation should be conquered and ruined? Or who *would* employ you in a state of anarchy and confusion, in which there would be no security for liberty, life, or property? The making of iron, the digging of coals, and even the tilling of the ground, the most necessary arts of life, be haved to be put to a stand in so dreadful a situation; and the far greater part of those who now live in comfort and ease, would soon die of cold and famine. In such distress every man would be an enemy to his neighbour, and seek the death of his friend, in order to preserve his own existence but a little longer. Thus, in the first years of the anarchy of France, before they began to be supported by the spoils of other nations, three millions of people, a greater number than there are in all Scotland, are said to have perished. So their own writers have computed near three years ago, and it is doubtful whether most of them were cut off by public massacres, or by private violence. I ask you, my brethren, in

the name of common sense, whether it is better to stand, or even to fall, if necessary, in the defence of our families, friends and country, in the defence of our lives, liberties and comforts, than to allow ourselves tamely to be reduced to this extremity of wretchedness? Whether it is better to live in comfort and honour, or even die with glory, than to exist a moment longer in misery, and then die with anguish and with infamy?

I shudder at the very apprehension of such evils as now threaten us, and trust they shall never be realized in this happy country, as they have lately been in others. Every one of you, my brethren, would certainly resist them unto death, if you considered what they have been there. Yes, could you view the wretched state in which your enemies have left their own country, and those provinces which they have over-run—cities reduced to ashes, churches destroyed, countries pillaged and wasted, the husbandman's hopes trampled under the feet of armies; and the fields, on which the yellow corn waved, covered with the blood and carcasses of the slain—every sex, and every age, exposed to the cruelty, barbarity, and brutality of an armed and lawless soldiery, and the miserable sufferers not allowed the last refuge of the wretched, the liberty of meeting together to invoke the mercy and aid of God—how would the sight of so much misery, carnage, and desolation shock you! God forbid that your eyes should ever see, or that your courage and strength should ever endure such dreadful calamities, of which the very hearsay is so full of horror! But worse than all this, if possible, our enemies would do to us, if we allow them to enslave and conquer us. For, if they have done this to their friends and neighbours, whom they pretended to set free, what will they not do to those whom they call their inveterate enemies, and whom they have peculiarly marked out for destruction? If even their

fraternal embrace crushed to death their friends, what torture may we, whom they deem their enemies, expect, if we allow them, like beasts of prey, to seize us in their dreadful and deadly talons?

But of all the evils to be dreaded from our enemies, if they should be allowed to prevail, the greatest is that of being deprived of the Christian religion. It was the Christian religion that civilized the world wherever it prevailed; and the degree of civilization which it produced was in proportion to the clearness with which it was known, and the respect with which it was obeyed and cherished. To the advantages we had in this respect, we are indebted for our mild and equitable laws, and for all our consequent prosperity. And should we allow our enemies to deprive us of this greatest of all blessings (which God knows we have too well deserved to lose), we see, from an awful example, that we should, almost instantly, be no better than savages or lawless barbarians. What our enemies have done already in their own country, they will undoubtedly do, in a short time, in every country to which their tyranny shall extend. They have abolished the Christian Sabbath, that day of joy and rest to the poor; and by adopting a new mode of reckoning time, it cannot now be known or distinguished, among them, from any other. They have proscribed the gospel, and taken the most effectual method they could devise to extirpate every vestige and memorial of the Christian religion. They have renounced their Saviour and denied their God; and that they may commit every crime without remorse, they endeavour to persuade themselves and others that death is an eternal sleep, and that there is no judgment to come; no punishment for crimes, no reward for virtues. Thus, they have snapped asunder every bond that holds society together, and every restraint which hitherto kept the world in any tolerable



order. Thus, they have given a sanction to crimes, and every encouragement to commit them. The terror of their arms is as nothing, compared with the dreadful effect and influence of these worse than hellish principles.—Good God! is it possible that thy rational creatures can bring themselves to such a stretch of impiety as to deny thy Providence, or to such consummate stupidity as to deny thy existence! Gracious Saviour! is it possible that those for whom thou didst die on the cross, should have the monstrous audacity of daring to blaspheme thy holy name, by which they were once called; and to renounce and abjure thy blessed gospel, with which they were kindly favoured! Is it possible that men should be such fiends to men, as to endeavour to aggravate their own guilt, misery, and condemnation, by robbing their fellow-creatures of the only foundation of all their present comforts, and of all their future hopes! O thou who didst pray for thy crucifiers! *forgive them*, if I may be allowed to pray so, for I cannot say, *they know not what they are doing*. But, if thou wilt, thy power and thy grace can yet reclaim them: for to thee nothing is impossible.

I know not, my brethren, what can affect you, or what can rouse you to a sense of your danger, and to a resolution of making every exertion to guard against it, if you are not, above all things, alarmed at the very apprehension of being deprived of the Christian religion. This is the peculiar treasure and eternal inheritance of the poor, and it is *their* peculiar duty and interest to value it highly, and to defend it mightily. If, for their country, friends, life, liberty, and comforts, they should contend unto death, for this especially they should dare to die. God forbid, my brethren, you should ever be brought to know the value of this inestimable blessing by being deprived of it. Then surely, of all the sufferers in the nation, *you* would be the



greatest; for undoubtedly *you* have the greatest share of the blessings of the gospel; which the rich, I am sorry to say, consider too much as belonging solely to the vulgar. As therefore *they* cannot be said to lose what too many of them do not care to possess, their loss would be only that of temporal comforts; but *you*, along with your temporal comforts, would lose, what is infinitely more, those joys which are eternal.—Under every pressure of life, what is it that now consoles the poor, but the comforts of the gospel, and the hope of eternal glory in heaven, after the toils and trials of this momentary life are over? Deprive the poor of this consolation, and then they are poor indeed: without any inheritance in the present world, and without any prospect in the future. Deprive them of this, and they can no longer *sing songs in the house of their pilgrimage*.

Can *you* then, my brethren of this description, allow yourselves, without every possible struggle, to be deprived of what should be your greatest comfort in this world, as well as your charter for future glory? The present contest may be considered as a trial of your faith and love, to prove whether you do, or do not, love your Saviour and value his gospel, by confessing him when others deny him, and by exerting yourselves to defend his gospel, against the wicked attempts of those who would banish it out of the world. If *you* are ashamed or afraid to own his cause (and if ever cause was his, this is it), remember *he* will be ashamed of you, when he comes in glory with all the angels of heaven. Remember *the fearful* in his cause, are particularly mentioned among those who shall be excluded from glory. For my own part, since ever the fate of Christianity came to be implicated in the present awful contest, and that the question came to be, Whether we should tamely give up, or vigorously defend the gospel, I think I hear a voice

perpetually sounding in my ear, *He that loves his life more than me, is not worthy of me. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.*

A calamity so great as that with which we are threatened, was never yet inflicted upon mankind. The Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Grecians, the Romans, the Goths and the Vandals, in succession, over-ran and subdued a great portion of the earth: but the nations whom they conquered were allowed to retain their religion, as some consolation under all their other miseries.

When I say that our enemies wish to deprive us of all we have, and all we hope for, without offering any thing in lieu of them, some may perhaps think that I wrong them; and sorry should I be to wrong even an enemy. I know that at one period they talked of giving us liberty and equality; and some were so foolish as to imagine that these specious words must mean something better than what we already enjoy. But is it not an insult upon common sense, to talk of giving liberty to those who are already free? If their business is to give liberty to mankind, they should go to some of the regions of Africa or Asia, or to any place rather than Britain, which has already more liberty than any country in the world besides. But in truth their business is, not to give, but to take liberty—the liberty of requisition without end, and plunder without measure—the liberty of depriving nations of their merciful and lawful sovereigns, and ruling or rather crushing them with the iron rod of cruel tyrants—the liberty of overturning their constitution and their laws, and throwing them into anarchy and confusion—the liberty of depriving them of their religion, and plunging them into atheism—the liberty of making earth a hell, and transforming men into devils. This, my brethren, is *their* liberty; of which they have already given a dreadful ex-

ample. This is the liberty, if *you* choose to take it, which you are to expect from professed atheists and infidels, and now avowed enemies: the liberty of committing crimes without remorse, defying Omnipotence, and ridiculing the threats of his vengeance. From such liberty, good God! deliver us.

They talked also of giving us equality; and this no doubt they would give us, in the literal and obvious meaning of the word; for they would make us all equally and completely wretched. All would be poor, and there would be none, as now, able to help the needy; except perhaps the viceroy and oppressors of the Directory, from whom, if we may judge of their conduct elsewhere, mercy is not the thing to be expected.

But let us suppose (merely for supposition sake) that our enemies should do what perhaps some few deluded people may have once imagined was meant by equality: that is, that they should fairly and generously divide all the territory of Britain and Ireland among the inhabitants, without asking any thing to themselves for their pains! Now let us see what this would amount to. The population of Britain and Ireland is computed to be 115 souls to the square mile, which would allow a fraction more than *four* Scotch acres to each. Every wild savage in America has a lordly estate compared to this, and he enjoys it with more security than any of us could expect to do, on the absurd supposition that such a division could possibly take place; for who would guarantee the poor possession, or secure any man from the oppression of one or more of his neighbours? But suppose, what is still more extravagant, that no man should molest his neighbour, and that the wolf and the lamb should peaceably dwell together, yet the average value of these four acres, taking the good and bad together, would not amount in the year to more than a few shillings. A mighty boon indeed, in lieu of all our



present vast and many comforts ! Would the poorest beggar among us barter all his blessings for such a trifle ? No ; the poorest beggar in Britain is now in a more enviable and safer condition than one of the Directory, or any of the five and twenty millions of France ; and much happier than any in Britain could expect to be, if the arms and principles of the French should subdue us. But I trust it is unnecessary to say more about the greatness of the evils which threaten us. Let us then,

3. Consider what measures we ought to adopt in order to avoid or repel them.

My brethren, while I address you as Christians, and urge you ever to remain so, you will allow the propriety of my recommending to you, in the first instance, to look up to God, the Governor of the universe, the ruler of the nations, and the Disposer of all events, both great and small, without whose notice even a sparrow cannot fall to the ground, and by whom all the hairs of our head are numbered. When, therefore, any calamity befalls us, whatever may be the immediate causes, we should consider it as ordered, for wise and good ends, by his appointment. As he does not willingly afflict the children of men, his present judgments are undoubtedly intended for the purpose of awakening us to a sense of our guilt and of our duty, and for bringing us to repentance, before the measure of our iniquities be full. If we allow his judgments to produce this effect, he will abundantly pardon, and establish us again in peace and tranquillity. Each of us has contributed his share to the national guilt, and each should now contribute his share to a national repentance and amendment. He who, in the midst of judgments, continues in his sins, aggravates them heinously, by helping to bring further distress upon his country. He who forsakes them, will find mercy for himself, and help, more than an armed man, to procure safety to the nation



to which he belongs. A nation is not so much saved by the multitude of its hosts, as by the multitude of its penitents. The weak, by becoming such, the sick, the aged and infirm, may help, more than an army, to defend their country. *When a man's ways please the Lord, he will make even his enemies to be at peace with him.* All who wish either to save their own souls, or to secure the vast blessings enjoyed by their happy country, will listen to the loud voice of Providence, and speedily take this course, and sin no more, lest worse come upon them: And may God by his grace add daily to the number.

I will not, my brethren, attempt to specify all the particular sins of which we should repent, as every one is best qualified to search out his own. I shall only mention a few national sins, against which our present national calamities seem to be particularly pointed; and of which the repentance and reformation ought, therefore, to be the more speedy. What these are, we may clearly read in those judgments with which we are threatened.—We are threatened with the loss of our king, constitution, and laws. Why? Because, though we were governed by the *golden sceptre* of the best of kings, we were insensible of such a blessing, and therefore we are threatened with being ruled with a *rod of iron*, and instead of one king, to have many despots and tyrants. We were dissatisfied with our constitution and laws, or at least not sufficiently thankful for them, though the best and mildest under heaven; and we are therefore threatened with being brought to know the value of them, by being deprived of them, and thrown into anarchy and confusion. We complained of our liberty, though we enjoyed it almost to licentiousness; and we are therefore threatened with what may be called the most abject slavery. We complained of the taxes, absolutely necessary for our security and defence,

though laid only upon luxuries and superfluities; and therefore we are threatened with a requisition of our all. Profit and pleasure were our idols, and now we are brought to see that we may lose our gods. We were uplifted by prosperity; and we are threatened with being humbled by adversity. We profaned the Sabbath (which was breaking down the fence of all religion); and we are threatened with having Sabbaths no more. We undervalued or despised the Christian religion, our chief and unspeakable blessing, and we are threatened with being deprived of its light, and left to grope in the shadow of death and darkness. We did not give to God the worship and honour due to him, in the closet, family, and temple, and therefore we are threatened to be left without God in the world; if not brought to the monstrous guilt and stupidity of denying, like our enemies, his very existence!—

**Flee then, my brethren, let me earnestly beseech you, from all sins, but more especially from these, the evident causes of our national calamities. Would our enemies dare so much as to project an attack upon us, or think of imposing their grievous yoke and horrid principles upon us, if the conduct of too many of us had not given them some reason to think, that in these respects, we were in some degree like themselves? Let us convince them of their mistake, by speedily and zealously practising the contrary virtues. Wherefore, my brethren, fear God: honour the king: love your country: value your constitution and your liberty: revere and obey the laws: respect your rulers; and prize and practise your religion; especially keep the Sabbath holy. Seek above all things to be reconciled to God; and having made him your friend, you need not fear your enemies.**

But remember, my brethren, that God commonly brings about his own ends by ordinary means, and not by miracles. Accordingly we find that

Moses and Joshua, even when they were assured of victory, were nevertheless commanded to prepare the host and lead them forth to battle ; as if the event depended on their own exertions. In like manner, while we, studious to please God, rely on Him for success, it becomes us to make every possible exertion ourselves. It is indeed a lamentable case that rational creatures should ever wage war against one another ; and God forbid, I should ever approve it, except in self-defence. But now that we cannot get peace on any terms, no other alternative is left, but to resist or perish ; to defend ourselves, or to be no more a happy, free, and independent people. It is therefore necessary to make every exertion, in defence of every thing that is dear to us. No people on earth had ever so much at stake as we have. The blessings and comforts, temporal and spiritual, which all of us, both rich and poor, enjoy, are so many and so great, that too much cannot possibly be done or suffered, in order to secure them to ourselves and to our posterity. Our forefathers shed their blood, and risked their lives, in causes of infinitely less importance ; and we reap the fruits of their successful contests. The contests then were, whether this or the other should be king ; and whether this or the other form of Christianity should be adopted ? But on the important issue of the present contest it depends, whether we shall have any king or regular government at all ; and whether we shall have any form at all of Christianity ? In so momentous a contest as this, no wise and good man will scruple to hazard his life : for what is life but prolonged misery, if every thing that is valuable in life should be lost ? Who would wish to mourn over the ashes of all the temporal and spiritual mercies now enjoyed by himself, his friends, and his country ? Who would wish to live, if life were burthened with such intolerable calamities as must then necessarily ensue ?



Consider, I beseech you, my brethren, how much easier it is to preserve, than to recover, our unspeakable blessings. Consider how much easier it is to resist the yoke, than to shake it off when our necks are fastened. This last would be the next thing to impossible. Where has been the great empire, which, after having been once allowed to fall, by the luxury, sloth, and supineness of its people, recovered again its splendour? The Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Grecian, and Roman empires thus fell, and never rose again. The nations whom Mahomet deprived of their liberty and their religion, above a thousand years ago, are still sunk in slavery, ignorance, and misery. The structure of a good government, like that of a great and complicated machine, requires immense toil and time to bring it to any perfection: but one fatal stroke may ruin it for ever. If we suffer such a stroke to ruin ours, the loss is irreparable. Britain took all the time since the world began to arrive at the happy state in which it now is; and if we should allow it to fall back into the barbarism which now threatens it, it is doubtful if it shall attain to such perfection again while the world continues.

But why should I speak of our falling when I am persuaded that neither the Providence of God, nor the spirit of our people, will permit it? The Providence of God is interested in supporting his own government, which is attacked as well as ours; and he has given us more than obscure hints, that we are to be honoured as his instruments in bringing his enemies to order. His Providence has visibly and remarkably displayed itself in our behalf hitherto: and his past mercies encourage our future trust. His many gracious interpositions in our favour seem to intimate, that he has intended us to be the depositaries and guardians of the Christian religion in Europe, or rather on the earth; for where else shall we look for its being encouraged and protected, if it is ba-

ished from Britain? We know that *the gates of hell cannot prevail against it*; and if we strenuously maintain it, we are sure to be successful. Our enemies are but the rod in our Father's hand, to correct our ingratitude and disobedience; and we may easily perceive, from his dealings towards us, that he means our reformation and not our destruction. The rod, I trust, shall soon have served its end; and then it shall be broken in pieces. The success of our enemies can be no more than a momentary flash, which, like the extinguished light of a candle, will soon end in sink and smoke. It is indeed impossible that the reign of anarchy and irreligion can be long, even if God should leave it to itself, and not dart his thunder; much less when we are sure that he will not stand an unconcerned spectator, when his government is insulted, his being denied, his Son blasphemed, and his holy religion declared a falsehood. Our struggle therefore, my brethren, cannot be of long continuance. Our cause is the cause of God, as well as our own, and that of our country. It is the cause of liberty, of Christianity, and of all mankind; for whom we alone stand in defence of the Christian religion; and God and man might execrate us, if we should not exert ourselves to maintain it.

Our strength and our resources are so great, and our cause so good, that through the help of God, we need not fear our enemies, if we exert ourselves and are firmly united. And what can unite us, if one great and common danger will not do it? All parties in politics, all sects in religion, and all ranks in society, should now unite as one man against their common enemy; who, if he were allowed to prevail, would ruin them all without distinction, by depriving them all of every thing worth the having. If thus united, we may bid our enemies defiance, and say, in the words of holy writ, *Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken*

*in pieces : take counsel together, and it shall come to nought : for God is with us.*

In order to strengthen our union, and encourage our exertion, I beg leave, my brethren, to suggest one measure, of which I trust you will approve, if it should be considered as proper by our rulers. It is, that all persons without distinction, capable of bearing arms, suppose from 16 to 60, or 65 years of age, should immediately enrol themselves, under officers constituted, in every town, parish and district, by the Lords Lieutenants of the counties, for the defence of their country. That all should take oaths, as enlisted soldiers, to stand or fall in defence of their lives, liberty, laws, and religion ; and provide themselves instantly with such arms as they can procure : and that they should turn out for a few hours, in one day in the week, in such a number, and place, as may be most convenient ; in order to accustom themselves to some military exercises, and be ready for any duty to which they may be called. By rising thus all in a mass, and becoming all, and at once, soldiers, our success will be the more sure, and the issue of the contest the more speedy. An ancient historian gives it as the reason why the Romans were able to conquer Britain, that “ instead of all uniting at first in defence of their country, only one party engaged after another, by which means all at last were conquered.” Let us not fall into the same error now, lest too late we should repent it. Doing things by halves will never do so well. Too much precaution cannot be used in a matter of such unspeakable importance. Even the poorest cannot be hurt by this voluntary and unconditional offer of their services, which will be amply repaid by the gratitude of their country, and by their share in its future prosperity ; on which all their comfort hangs. No man is worthy of such a country who will not do this much to defend it. If any should refuse it, the work can



be done without him ; but he may look for reproach and infamy, when renown and honour shall be the lot of his neighbours.

Perhaps some will say, that we are already as much bound to stand or fall in defence of our country, as oaths can make us. I grant it: But the taking of an oath before a Justice or Magistrate, and enrolling ourselves for the special purpose of defending all that is dear and valuable to us, will impress our duty more strongly on our own minds ; and convince our enemies that we are more resolute and determined than they perhaps imagine. This will also discover if we have any secret enemy, lurking like a serpent in the bosom of his country, and point out to his neighbours the necessity of watching his motions : for I am convinced there can be none so hardened as to take *the oath of the Lord* falsely ; when the most flagitious consider even their illegal oaths to be binding. In a word, complete union, and universal exertion, will procure us a speedy termination of the war, and secure all our blessings to ourselves and to our posterity ; and there will be still in Europe at least one great and happy nation, who will be free men and Christians.

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